
DIANA SAUNDERS.

Soon after the war of 1812 there came to our county one of the most interesting and eccentric personalities that our older people remember anything about, Mrs Diana Saunders, late of Rocky Point on Dry Branch of Swago. She was the widowed mother of four children, Anna, Eleanor, Cyrus, and Isaac. Her cabin home was built near the head springs of Dry Branch, almost in speaking distance of the Rocky Point school-house, and just below.

Cyrus Saunders lived in Madison County, Va., and was a merchant and a citizen of prominence.

Isaac Saunders, upon attaining his majority, went to Fayette County, married, and settled on the banks of New River not far from the Hawk's nest. His sister Anna made her home with him for a time, and then became Mrs Ewing of Fayette County.

Eleanor Saunders was married to Barnett Adkisson, from Madison County, and lived on Spruce Flat on the head of Swago, on the place now occupied by James Adkisson. In reference to her children we have in hand the following particulars, communicated by John Adkisson.

Catherine first became wife of William Tyler, from Madison County, and then Mrs Jacob Weiford, near Millpoint.

William Adkisson, whose wife was Martha Jones, from Madison County, lived on Spruce Flat.

Abel Adkisson, whose first wife was Susannah,

daughter of the late Daniel Adkisson, and whose second wife was Frances Hughes, lived on the head of Swago, where his son Oliver Blake now lives.

Daniel Adkisson married Mary Holmes of Madison County, and settled on Spruce Flats.

Isaac Adkisson married Martha Young, and lived at the "Young Place" on Rich Mountain.

Frances Adkisson first became Mrs James W. Silvey and lived at the head of Swago. She was afterwards married to the late Joseph Rodgers, and lives near Millpoint.

Nancy married Benjamin Taylor of Nicholas County and settled on New River. He was a hatter by occupation.

Martha Jane Adkisson married James Arthur, of Webster County, and went to the western part of the State.

Lucinda Adkisson, the youngest of Eleanor's daughters, was married to Rev Joshua Buckley, and lived at Buckeye. Some reference to her family is made in other sketches.

But few persons have left their impress upon the writer's memory more vividly than Mrs Diana Saunders. As to her personality, she had been formed in "Nature's choicest mould" and in her youth must have been the peer of Edgar Allen Poe's "rare and radiant maiden." The writer recalls one or more of her granddaughters as among the most perfect models of feminine form and feature that he has observed anywhere.

From the way Granny Saunders used to speak of

Jim Madison, Jim Monroe, and Tom Jefferson, and wonder how such finicky, limber-jointed, red headed, fiddling and dancing customers had ever been made Presidents of our United States, it is inferred that her blooming youth must have been passed in Orange and Albermarle atmosphere.

The writer was frequently told by his lamented mother that when he was an infant about six weeks old he had the whooping cough so severely that he was given up to die. As a last resort Granny Saunders was sent for in all haste, and when she arrived the baby was to all appearances cold and dead. The doctress ordered a tub of hot water, plouted the baby in, soaked him awhile and gave him a good rubbing. She then called for a razor and a goose quill, scarified the little body between the shoulders, inserted the quill and gave him a blowing up until the infant began to blow for himself. He came to and recovered, and has been blowing seventy years on his own hook, figuratively speaking. There have been times in his life when the writer has felt rather regretfully that Granny Saunders managed her case so well as to keep him from dying at that safe time. Now, however, he feels thankful to God for what she was able to do. He deems it a most wonderful privilege to have lived the life the Supreme Being has allotted to him. Though this life has been humble and obscure, full of mistakes and blunders, still, blessed be His Holy name, for life and its wonderful hopes for the hereafter, when the Lord comes.

It would be hard to exaggerate the useful services performed by Mrs Saunders for a half century

or more, when there was no resident physician nearer than the Warm Springs or Lewisburg. For years and years her time was virtually spent in the homes of the suffering. Stormy nights, swollen, raging mountain streams and torrents were braved by this heroic woman to be with the sick in their distress.

While it is true the most of her services were rendered in scenes over which the thickest veil of privacy should be ever drawn, yet it may not be out of good form to say that she never lost her self possession. The patient might be to all appearances in extremis, with less than a step between her and death in the throes of maternity, all present convulsed with grief and apprehension except Granny Saunders. She would dip her pipe in the ashes, ejaculate prayers along with the puffs of smoke, and sit down by the patient: "Hold on old girl, we can't spare you yet; pick your flint and try it again. I have been praying for you, and the good Lord Almighty never goes back on his word to old Granny Saunders."

In the course of an hour or so, Granny Saunders looks up the "old man." When she finds him she opens her arms as if to embrace him. He draws back exclaiming, "Oh Granny, don't do that!" "Well, you ugly beast, if you won't let me kiss you, come in and see what a pretty thing the good Lord has sent your old woman. How it could be so pretty no one could tell without seeing the mother!"

One of the most praiseworthy traits in the character of this grand woman was her abhorrence of "doggy ways," as she would tersely put it. She was greatly

worried by the way a young man seemed to be treating a girl in whom she felt a motherly interest. Appearances seemed to indicate that the "young rascal of a puppy" had plucked the the rose, but left the thorn with her heartbroken young friend; or in other words had fooled her upon a promise of marriage.

One day, it seems, the young man met her in the road, and he said: "Granny Saunders, if you do not quit talking about me, as I hear of you doing, I shall have to sue you for slander."

The old lady cleared her decks for action, rolled up her sleeves and shook her fist under his nose. "I am ready for you here, at the court house, or anywhere else, outside the bottomless pit. There is where pups like you are bound to go, so I will not promise to have anything to do with you there. I cannot blame a Beaver Dam evening wolf for coming over here and stealing a lamb, for it is built that way, and can't know any better, but when I see a customer like you, with good looks, good natural sense and belonging to a decent family, guilty of things the Old Boy would be above doing, I must tell you, I do say I must tell you the dirtiest, yellow, egg-sucking dog in all Pocahontas is an angel to what you are. If the devil knows you as I do, and thinks of you as I do, he will put you on one of his hottest gridirons all by yourself, as not fit company for any other lost soul."

Granny's words seem to have been "winged ones." The suit was never brought for slander, he mended his ways, looked through his Bible and found a verse in Paul's writings that convinced him that the easiest way

out of the tangle would be to marry as he had promised.

If there could have been kept a faithful record of all her doings and sayings it would have made a book by itself, nothing like it in extant literature. She had an entertaining story of the time the troops were on the march to Yorktown, and about Washington stopping at the yard fence and calling for water. Her mother sent her out with bucket and gourd, fresh from the well, and watered the thirsty general and staff attendants. "They took their water, and I tell you they all drank a few, and then the grandees rode away with high heads and stiff upper lips, looking at me as if they thought it was about all that I was fit for, to handle the water gourd for their pleasure."

She had many stories that thrilled the little folks. One was about a child being born in 1775 that only lived a few minutes. Before it died it said just as plainly as could be spoken by a grown person:

"A warm winter and a cold spring,
A bloody summer and a new king!"

One of her most popular lullabys had this refrain:

"Sleep all day and cry all night,
Whippoorwill, whippoorwill."

Persons yet living remember the reply she once made to the salutation, "Well, Granny, how are you to day?"

"Poorly enough, to tell you truth. O dear, I am just here and that is all. I have pains in my face, pains in my ears, pains in the top of my head, at the

back of my neck, between my shoulders, in my arms, in my breast, in my body, in my knees, in my ankles, in both my big toes." Then pausing a moment as if trying to think of more places for pains, she would raise her eyes toward heaven and devoutly exclaim, "But praise the Lord, bless His Holy Name, I have a good appetite!"

Late in the fifties or early in the sixties, she went to make her home with Isaac and Anna, on New River, where she died fifteen or twenty years ago, aged about a hundred and three years as most of her acquaintances believe. Dear old friend, the Creator has not sent many like her to our part of the world as yet.

LANTY LOCKRIDGE.

One of the most widely known of Pocahontas families in former years was that of the ancestor of the Lockridge relationship, at Driscot, four miles east of Huntersville. It was a place of resort for visiting lawyers to and from Huntersville on public occasions. Pleasant mention is made of the kind treatment received and of the nice and bountiful table comforts enjoyed in the memoir of the late Howe Peyton, and in some published reminiscences of George Mayse, of the Warm Springs.

Lancelot (Lanty) Lockridge, the progenitor of the name in our county, came from the Lower Bull Pasture, in Highland county, about four miles up the river from Williamsville, Bath county. Mrs Lockridge was Elizabeth Benson, of the same vi-